

DEFEATING THE LAST ENEMY



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We don't need any avowal for the truth to be true, just we are long,
where we belong.

27.09.2020

Day 1

I thought it was a clap of thunder. Dad and me rushed to open the window, looked in each other's eyes and realized It's the birth of battle.

Today, in the morning of September 27, Azerbaijan launched intensive shelling along the entire Artsakh-Azerbaijan Line of Contact. Human settlements came under fire, including capital Stepanakert.

The response will be commensurate, and all the responsibility for the escalation lies with the Azerbaijani military-political leadership and the Azerbaijani leader personally-announced the Artsakhpress. In this state according to the order twenty kids and 15 grownups urged to basement. We took some food, clothes, first-aid items. All were in confusion. The peace they savor was heavy, they needed apprehension afterward their inner alarm awaken. Though they have experienced it twice,

there was a look of startled dismay on their faces. Some kids were laughing, thinking it was weapon shooting game. Others were afraid as they knew it was a real game, where we struggle for our lives. We welcomed many people. In the result there were 50 people, also we had a newborn baby. She came into this world yesterday, didn't open her eyes saw the torture of her mother...

All of us were doing something. Men were busy in placing beds, fire building. Women were feeding their kids, some of them were just protesting against the government. I was encouraging kids with filled eyes. They were asking many questions- What will be then, won't we go to school, will they summon our dads and brothers?

I had no answer. I had no reliance. We were just waiting, waiting with our hearts full of hope.

1,2,3 and boom. From the basement's window I saw how Ours defeated two

drones which fall down as their volition should. It was something inexplicable. I felt so much proud of our brave soldiers. They make us high-spirited, powerful. We get lusty to continue dealing with difficulties and for the vital moment to kill them as they kill our peaceful population.

From time to time we take our heads out from the door of shelter, for feeling some air. As we listen the SIREN we go into, the kids roar, we shut them down.

We shut ourselves, our inner voice wanna shout, but what can we do? Just to be quite calm, sit quite still...

The kids slept, others are waiting-the hell knows for what.

They tell us about that "dark and cold days" they had had, after every phrase repeating „We are stronger than ever, don't panic, our soldiers will defeat them, and we, from our side will help by believing in them"...

It's already 2:16, elders are awake,

all yawning, but they are alarmed, wanna sleep but no. They are waiting for another attack. I slept for 20mins, listening sounds of bullets. This all affected on me so much that i started imagining things and listening unrealistic noises. I jumped out of the bed and asked the man who was standing near us „Again?".

"When something happens I will inform, you don't worry, we are here, your protectors are with you" -responded he. That night I slept with tears in my eyes, fear in my heart. I was afraid that one day I won't be who I'm.



28.09.

Day 2

The day started with an agonizing, harrowing alarm.

That was the signal which was placed in our brains...

We went houses to get some food, change clothes. Here we don't have toilet. So it's bit difficult, mainly with kids. As I live on the 1st floor, mostly all use ours.

I see a relief in kid's faces. They seem like getting used to these conditions. They became calm and comfortable there. The first day they even didn't get along with each other. Now they play together. Doing some naughty things, but „Kid will be a kid“. They said- it was good here, though we barely slept at night...

All are in tension. To keep us near them, or sent us to Yerevan?. They prepared our things. But how to leave 'em?

*How to go away, leaving them behind?
What will be then? How long this will
continue?*

*Nothing can fill the empty blank of our
feelings. Until you are not in it, you can't
understand it.*

*Looking around, all are packing their
clothes, getting cars to go.*

*Listening to the news. He died, his/her
dad...died. These all fills your heart. Your
tears are slowly running. You know why?
This can happen with all of us. Tomorrow
our dads and brothers can be in the same
place. We accept it. Truth is truth. Sooner
or later all men of the country will be
summoned, we will stay under shelter, eyes
looking on their return.*

*Some left us and new people are coming.
Welcomed 3 teenagers. We became friends
easily.*

*I kept looking at the clock which jerked
from one minute to the next, but it seemed
like it stopped at the same place. So I*

decided to organize a game, to pass some time. I run to the house quickly, took



paper, wrote the exercises that children should do and put it inside the jar. We had some fun together.

As it got calmer and we didn't listen the sounds of bullets anymore we went to see other basements. The same condition was there. Kids, their innocent faces, smiles... Came back, didn't open the door, we immediately heard „The enemy has launched a new large-scale attack”.

Mom called me, said- take these phone numbers as you will need them.

00:40

Kids can't sleep. No one can. We are afraid. They are gonna send us to Yerevan. So now parents are waiting for cars (if they reach) to take us from here.



29.09

Day 3

At night 4 men came from Yerevan. They told us "Come inside the cars, quickly". Actually none of us wanted to leave the basement. Not only this. We were afraid to stay on the half way, to die while leaving. Parents didn't know to send us or not. If they do, it's possible the enemy would attack on our cars, if they don't, we would be in danger. Both options were dangerous but our parents decided made us go. I tried to convince my mom to come with us but she didn't, saying "my place is near my husband". Many thoughts came into my head "her husband is important than us? How will I take care of brothers alone?". While leaving mommy gave me a box, and said to use it when there will be no other way.

We had 7 hours' long trip from Shoushi to Yerevan. Whole time we didn't talk 'bout anything but our parents. It was like we quit the land, where we were born, were taught, were grown up as a human. We were full of fear, anything could happen at any time. Suddenly. Unexpectedly...

Thanks to God we reached to the destination. Here all is good .The woman who has given us place to stay at, is so lovely. She has 2 cute kids.

We were informed that the other kids who had remained in basements, will be sent to Yerevan tomorrow.

We welcomed 5 people in our new, cozy corner. All of them are terrified, not only becoz of the situation, but also their betrayal act to their land. For us going out, leaving your land means you are a betrayer. But we had to do it, there was a reason and we realized it then.

30.09

Day 4

Trying to smile, not to lose hope, not to think that the war is taking place in Artsakh, but do you know how hard and painful is it? What will we do? All say be strong, everything will be fine. How will it? All will die, our relatives friends, loved ones, then it will be fine? There is no way out of the war, either we or they. Here is no option. We should be and we will.

It seems queer, here-sitting in the room, sleeping on the bed, eating normal food, while my parents and all my neighbors lying on the floor, sharing a piece of bread, no sleep at all.

We think to go back, to be by their side, but...

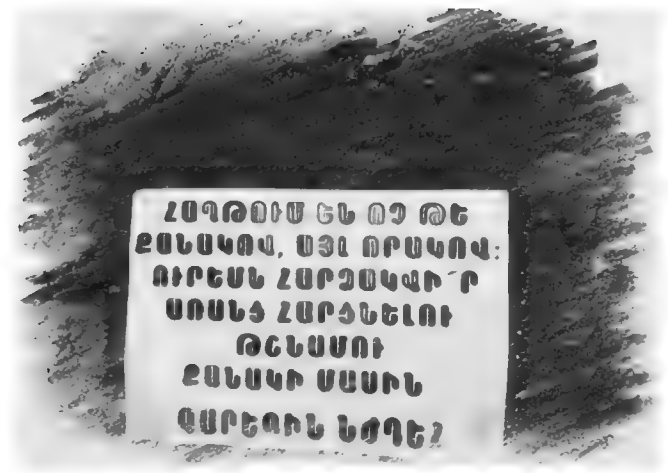
We went to the church today. It was crowded with hundreds of people. All they were praying for their sons, close ones.

While walking I saw many cars with a pattern on it “Զինվորի” (to the soldier). A

number of young volunteers express their support for the Armenian soldier, sending them food, medicine, etc. Some people sent for us clothes for me, brothers and 2 of my neighbors. 6-17 yrs old boys say- We are going there, our place is near our brothers, we must help them.

A single word about Artsakh makes me cry. Going mad. Lost in thoughts. Eyes on the way to my . But here I should stay... I talked with mom, she was smiling, laughing but not like me. I see her and get strength. She says- we are getting support, we have food to eat, one day I sleep another day she sleeps, you don't have to worry, Jan.

Parents are strong with their children. My actions only make me ill, but I have to be strong. If not for me, so for loved ones. Azeris and Turks brutally break anything on their way, but they can never break Armenians. We will win, we are invincible.



01.10

Day 5

We got new “guests”. They told us that yesterday was the worst one...I watched the video, idk it was unbelievable. When we called parents they said that all was good but what they say doesn't correspond with the reality.

I had a video call with mom, she said “Yanka, don't worry ,the situation is controllable here...you be good there, take care of brothers, you will come here soon ,or I will come there...”

Today all people got support from government, they have free Wifi there. Dad made possibilities there, now they have toilet, more beds, heating...

One of the newcomers told us that his brother and 7 boys were ambushed by Azeris. They were running, about 20kms, but thanks to God they could escape as our enemies are blind, they just shoot meaningless.

They told us the condition of shelters was poor. They woke up near the rats and mice. All of them are ill, they have fever one by one. There is so damp and sloppy.

Its so difficult to write. I don't want to lose hope, but when I think about the circumstances in trenches, remembering that my uncles and brothers are there, I feel completely inanimate.

02.10

Day 5

As we woke up, we heard „In Stepanakert there are many injured people of civil infrastructures. Stepanakert was bombarded and so on. The situation will not get better, I suppose.

Today we got a call from a person, who is the relative of the man who brought us to his house. He is Mr.Brutyman. He took us to the market. Generally we didn't need anything. We packed our clothes with us, even our moms put winter coats inside the bag. We are good with our things.

When we entered the market, from our dialect they understood we are from Artsakh. Then we just stood there, the shopkeepers put into the baskets anything they had under their hands

I approached to that old, kind man, saying „You can't imagine how poor we feel now, we don't need anything at all. We still have some amount of money”.

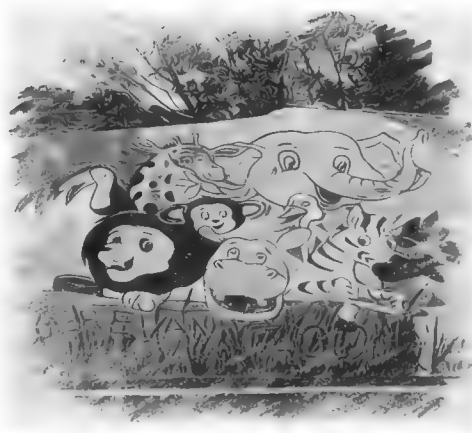
He smiled, tightly hugged me and said- I know, you don't need, but if you accept our gift we will feel so appreciated. He is one of the best persons whom I met in my life. We visited to Mother Armenia statue, took



some photos. Then had some walk in the Victory park, fed the fishes. Mr.Brutyan brought his son's bicycle, so we were cycling too. We had such a nice time. We enjoyed a lot, but when you cant bring your mind from faraways, nothing can make you feel happy.

The next day he organized a party like show. He called some heroes, ordered a strawberry cake, gave us colourful balloons. After so many days I saw happiness in children's eyes. We also went to Yerevan Zoo

. I was amazed. I've never seen so many animals at one place. And here also Mr.Brutyán showed his love. He doesn't only care about people but about that little



creatures. The person who loves animals can never be bad.

I'm very grateful to him as he was the one who made my brother laugh heartfully. His support was a special gift for us. He made us feel alive again, when we forgot to smile, forgot to live, to enjoy the life.



05.10

Stepanakert city and Shoushi are heavily bombarded by Azerbaijani forces.

Today 4 people arrived. They had been in the same basement as I was.

My mom and 2 woman remained there.

Mommy doesn't want to come. I try my best, call her every hour, but she is on her words. I had talked with dad, he said- I'm gonna send your mom, she will come...

The situation is not in our control. In Shoushi because of the shelling many people died and left the ruins alone, still many remained under the ashes.

I look at the pictures of my capital Stepanakert and can't recognize it. Seems like it's Syria. All around are ruins, the sky is dull grey, the sorrow covered the city.

We got support today, too. They sent for us clothes and many more...

Shoulder to shoulder, we will turn mountains upside down. We can win

together. No one can help us, others will not fight for us.

Don't be blind. Wide open your eyes. Can you see what's going on?

18.10

Feels like time has stopped. We are growing as we always do, but our lives paused, we stacked on the broken merry-go-round..

September 26 was the last day we genuinely lived.

Till now my dad was talking so manfully, cheerfully, but today I noted "Smth is wrong with him, what's going there?"

The person who lived through war, witnessed horrible things feels that there is no way out of it...I can understand. The first day I could barely talk, open my mouth as it was harrowing me, shivering from horror.

Then he said “Yana, my lassie, don’t worry, its high time and I’m gonna join the army as a volunteer”.

For a moment I couldn’t help crying, but I kept myself, showed that I’m a strong girl as my dad knows.

I’m trying to continue my “lost” life, to move on.

The owner of the house, said that he found a job for me.

I was afraid, actually I was thinking “Why do I need to work now? Am I ready to do it? Move on?.I was thinking...

Next day his friend(my boss) came. You remember Mr. Brutyan? He is his son. His name is Gor. He explained what should I do, and I decided to try, to make busy my mind and my “meaningless” life.

Instead of wasting time at home, it’s better to work. So I started my job in Real Estate Agency. The atmosphere is engaging and alluring. They are my kind of people, filled with bravery and courage.

They help me, mostly the girl-Annie ,not only in work concerns but also mentally. She said “We are with you and know that if there is Smth that we can help you with, say without hesitation, speak up and share with me”...

Before war I thought there is no humanity in this world, even I made a poster, which said “Escape from people”.

But now I can say “There is still humanity due to people who wear their name “human” with care and tendency.

War will end soon, I hope. But I will never forget the people who supported us those

days. Each of them has a little place in my



life, which makes me again feel alive.

22.10

Whenever I think that the war is about to end, it proves me reverse. All is deceptive.. Every time smth appalling shit takes place. You get a smallish "Hope balloon" with a writing "All will be good soon", and what happens then? They explode, They blow it up.

But then again you have high hopes. However you think, you desire that you will be in your own house. You wouldn't

*keep silent, as you are in stranger's place.
Instead you would wag cheerfully. Your
mom wouldn't say "Behave yourself, laugh
less, you are not at your home". Instead
you would sit in a cozy corner, reading
your favorite book with a cup of ginger
tea, knowing that it's your own house.*

*There are your rules, principles.
Seems difficult, isn't it? But this is what we
go through.*

*The mood swings kill me. Changing every
1minute. Laughing as a mad, crying like an
insane.*

*Its already 25days I'm here, but I look
around, all seems so unfamiliar and
unusual. The sway of trees, the noise of
cars, the buildings, the sky, the people...I
want that ruins, that fresh air, I want my
balcony, my room. I want to go the church.
They ruined it, but even though I pray to u,
Lord be the keeper of my people, always...I
wanna walk around, pick dandelions, to
wish a dream.*

I wanna go there deadly. But with a change, which is "I will never say, I want to go out from here".

But it's ok. We can't do anything at the moment, except staying here and praying to God. We should learn how to live in war, how to continue your life, how to make it brighter even though the outer world is so dull and nebulous.

Soon the war will end. Children will play again, the country will evolve again. Trees will grow in the battle field. We will walk again along the streets without the fear, that above our head smth is not gonna explode. We will... We will...



No one can understand the pain
soldiers have and the pain of a man who just lost his friend.

They understand and feel the pain of facing and seeing
death first hand. But they chose that way.

They chose to face the death.

In the battlefield we lose our favorite ones-our friends. But we can't do anything now

They had already left us physically.

But mentally they are always in our
thoughts. Their friendship, struggle for life, homeland, no one will forget.

They are always with us, looking from the sky, feeling pride that they have the ones
who will continue their holy responsibility for motherland.

28.10.

*While I was working, for a moment I
logged in Facebook and this is what I got.
"Shoushi is being shelled from Smerch
MLRS. Can anyone imagine how I felt?
What? Really? My homeland? My heart's
town...Is it high time for Shoushi?"*

A house was fully destroyed, now what the owners of the house will do?

Innocent people die. How fucked up you have to be to kill pure and naive people?

They even caused a great damage to the maternity hospital of the capital...What can u expect from this kind of "people-animals-destroyers-terrorists?"

Looking at the picture of my school-broken windows, ruined yard. Becoz of them now we are deprived from getting education, but this is less. What's Education for them? Nothing. What can uneducated person do? Destroy school, that's all.

Its the 31 day of the war. Now we don't feel the day, the night. All messed up. Whole day on feet, watching TV, listening to the news, feeling hopeless, calling to our soldiers who give us hope, Smiling, encouraging us. For some time we become so powerful, so stimulated

But it's just for a moment. Don't we know what's going there?

*How strong, patriot boys we have, ain't it?
But they are not boys now, they are men.
The war is making men from them. The
actions they see, the timing when they
escape from death these makes them men.
With every enemy killed by them assembles
and they become boy+man +strong
man..and so on. They are our pride. The life
and peaceful nights we have is only due to
them, due to our brother soldiers. We all
are responsible for them, and we are
beholden.*

07.11

Diana, 21y/o

We have a habit to complain about everything. Whole our life we complained about our life, we got tired of everything. even We got tired of getting tired. We used to say "This is not life, but the life was that, not this what we live through.

The life was that shiny mornings, that Bright people's smiles.

Its 1 month we don't live our lives. The life is reflected in bombs,ruins,sad faces. This is not the life I wished for.

I will never complain, now I'm happy what I have and what I don't have. I just wish for peace, I want that this all stop and our sufferings end. I just want to listen "Diana the war ended, your wish came true, You will see your relatives and precious people. You will not see them only in video call, you will see them face to face. You will not get happy only by listening their voices, but by seeing their faces".

"Peace, please lead our country, come above our heads and I Promise I will never

complain".

07.11

*Why to complain about strangers when
your relatives closed themselves for you?
From yesterday my all relatives died for
me. You know why?*

*When we were in our good days, all were
by our side*

*Now when we need help and support no
one of them is with us. Literally no one.
We shifted to Sevan. The only thing we
have is a house and some money. We
should pay for facilities, also food we
should get ourselves. The house wasn't
populated for 5 years. So you can imagine.
Here the cold is unbearable. And I was
laughing on my parents as they put my
winter coat. I was like- are u mad? Will we
stay there till winter? I don't want any
coat, will come back soon, and I will not
need warm clothes. But still they put my*

coat in the bag. I thought there is no cold place except Shoushi..bt this is, idk what. Here is no water, no gas, no washing machine. As I said we have only HOUSE. Yesterday we went for asking some water, and communicate with a family..Bt what we experienced will surprise you. We knocked the door, 1st they didn't open, they slightly opened



the window. We said "Hello, we are from Artsakh, we came to ask for some water as we don't have, and to have some talk". The



reply followed "Now? At this time(it was 19:30). No we can't now".

We left wordless. This kind of ignore I have never experienced. Bt this should have happened. Thanks to God now I know one more kind of people.

The night was awful. So cold. One bed and 4 people on it..We couldn't close the door, so we were so frightened.

The mice were running. Smth nasty happened too. I woke up and saw a little-little shit of a mouse on the table. So I

*threw away the food we had. Nothing is good at all. What can we do?
The life continues, we should carry on.
#During those hard days this book bacame my friend for some hours..Im very thankful*



to the man who gave me this with an open heart.

09.11

*The people in village are so friendly.
Coming and going everyday, asking our
well being.*

*My colleagues Gor and Ani came to see us. I
was delighted. I know them for 1
month ,but they have done more than any
of my relatives. We had some talk. Then
started searching for apartments for rent.
Me and Ani found smth nice in Yerevan
city. Here I got happiness,becoz I couldn't
continue living in this place. They went to
the shop, bought some essential
things...Then they left,bt will come again to
take us to the new apartment.*

*Unfortunately we couldnt shift there. The
owner of the apartment wasnt reliable. So
i started searching for more apts.*

*Once I got a call from an Indian boy, who
told me that he gave his house to Artsakh
people and now was searching a little
corner for him. Sadly, I couldn't find. I was
expected to help him, but in result he
helped me a lot.*

He kept asking about my dad, brothers. I asked him if he knew any person who could give us a place to live. After some time he gave me the phone no of the owner of the hostel. I talked with that man(Mr. Vinay Bansal) and he agreed immediately. He is such a kind and understanding person, also he said that we will always be welcomed here. Though we live on rent, but even the Armenians don't do this much for Armenians.

The name of the hostel is Shri Gopal Gayatri Lok which is situated in Arabkir district. As u put your feet on the floor, you will feel like home. A little ,2-floor building with a pleasing atmosphere, and with a helpful staff.

We got many Indian brothers here. Days here pass quickly. In Sevan i was dying every day. In past I enjoyed being alone, hated the people. Bt now I'm afraid to be left alone. We want to be surrounded with

*people, to talk, to share some things,
otherwise we cant survive longer.*

11.11

*The top is ours. The boys had gone-2016
Neither the top is ours ,nor the boys are
with us-2020.*

*The war ended, but what about our inner
war?*

*We lost everything, we lost what belonged
us.*

*We have been building houses all our lives,
have been changing it, improving, adding
more and more to make it special. And to
lose it within seconds, to end up without
your own hearth, without our little corner
in a big and strange world - break our
hearts, makes us feel worthless.*

I did not take anything from my home, not even photo album. I have a hope that one day I will go back to my homeland.

I don't want to imagine that now one "sheep-Azeri" is sitting on our sofa, sleeping in my bed, touching my personal things, looking at my pictures, tearing it into pieces. I wanted to bring my teddy bears, which were so valuable for me. I left them on my bed, hugging each other.

Before coming here I kissed my teddy, hugged and promised" I will come to you. Now I left you with your sister, but don't worry, I will be back soon and then we will talk for hours". I didn't bring them, I had the hope to see them again.

Now I want my house to be in fire, I don't want that they enjoy our efforts. Its my house, no one has right to enter inside.

Till now I can't believe that my Shoushi is under their control, can't believe that instead of Armenians, azeris walk in our streets.

The war has ended, but the war for our soldiers will never end. They lost their blood just for the peaceful life of enemies. Sorry Boys. But nothing will remain like this, we will take our regions back, we will live in our sweet homeland. We will take a revenge for your lost life.

The war has ended, but the wish, desire to go back to our homes vanished. We can't at this moment. How to live in a place where from the top the Azeris are looking at you, following you.

When I was a kid, and we hadn't repaired our house, it was in Azeri style. Still I remember their wallpaper, that dull green color. I don't want to go back and see this again. I want my house, our modern type, which we had been repairing whole our life.

I want to feel that fresh air, to escape from house, to walk for hours in forests, picking flowers, to look at the sky, to dream about bright days. I want to sit in our stairs, to

*look at the Moon,to cry, to share with her
my secrets. But all this I want to do only in
Shoushi, in the city of my heart.*

30.11

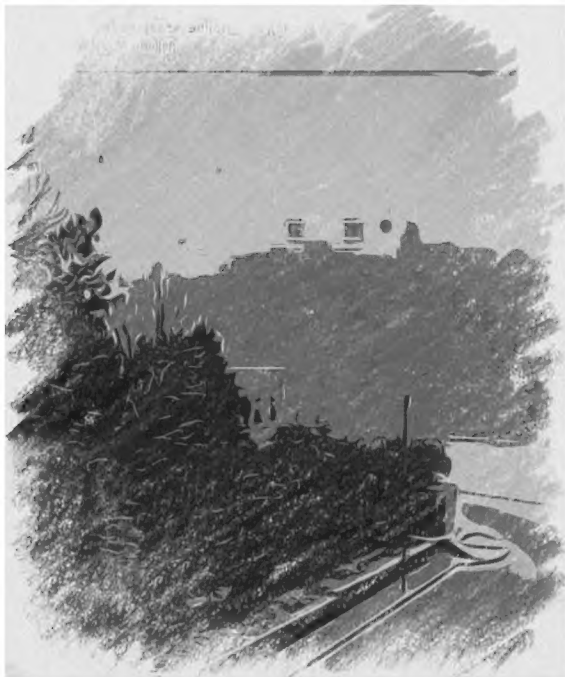
*It' was fantastic when you see Shoushi
covered with white layer, those snow
particles falling onto your body, that snow
fight full of joy, that snowman which you
and your friends had made. It was
awesome and can't be described in words.
The first snow in Shoushi was not yet
frozen, it was soft and very light. We used
to go outside, make trenches from snow,
divided into groups, played enemy-enemy.
In one group were the evils(Azeris), in
another group the angels (Armenians) and
we hit each other with snowballs.
I was running, lieing on the snow, making
angel's wings, going to the park, standing*

*under the fir-tree and shaking the
branches of the winter queen.*

*Now all of these...War? Where have you
taken my warm memories? Why you gone
so cruel and callous? What wrong we had
done to u? Now is it right that we watch
our first snow by stalking Azeri's sites?
What the hell they have done with my
town? Why they should enjoy our 20 year's
efforts? Why? Who can explain it to me?
Can you? I'm waiting for your answer...
We shouldn't look at it from the distance. I
want to open the window, feel the fresh air,
open my mouth and get the snow flakes on
my tongue, want to go, find icicles ,suggest
my friends and as a habit they say "we
don't want" ,so all would be mine.
I want to go back, to see this all with real
eyes.*

*But You didn't let me enjoy it. You acted
like a blind, closing your eyes. You acted
like a deaf and due to your lame act ,we
became walking deads.*

*Do you think we will live? Can you?
Imagine yourself in our place. Imagined?
So now? What do you think?
My heart is closed and the key of it is in our
dead soldier's lost mind, whose lives you
have taken from us just for complement of
your dirty games.
Thank you for the future you had chosen
for us. We will never forget your special
gift which made an indelible footprint on
our lifetime.*



*#1st pic -Shoushi under the control of
Azerbaijan*

#2nd pic-Shoushi under the control of us.